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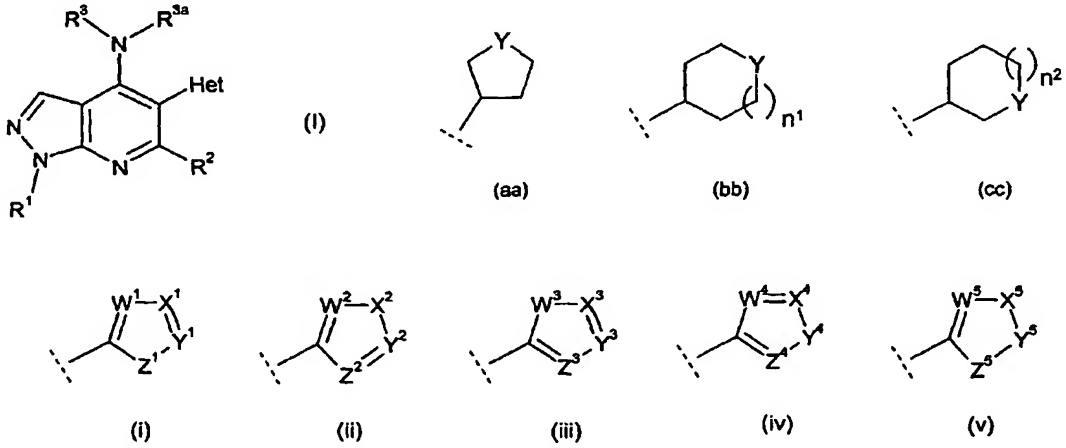
(54) Title: PYRAZOLO[3,4-b]PYRIDINE COMPOUNDS, AND THEIR USE AS PHOSPHODIESTERASE INHIBITORS



(57) Abstract: The invention relates to a compound of formula (I) or a salt thereof: Formula (I) wherein: R^1 is C_{1-4}alkyl, C_{1-3}fluoroalkyl or $-(CH_2)_2OH$; R^2 is a hydrogen atom (H), methyl or C_1fluoroalkyl; R^{3a} is a hydrogen atom (H) or C_{1-3}alkyl; R^3 is optionally substituted branched C_{3-6}alkyl, optionally substituted C_{3-8}cycloalkyl, optionally substituted mono-unsaturated-C_{5-7}cycloalkenyl, optionally substituted phenyl, or an optionally substituted heterocyclic group of sub-formula (aa), or (bb) or (cc) in which n^1 and n^2 independently are 1 or 2; and Y is O, S, SO_2, or NR^4; and wherein Het is of sub-formula (i), or (ii), or (iii), or (iv) or (v). The compounds are phosphodiesterase (PDE) inhibitors, in particular PDE4 inhibitors. Also provided is the use of a compound of formula (I), or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof, in the manufacture of a medicament for the treatment and/or prophylaxis of an inflammatory and/or allergic disease in a mammal such as a human, for example chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), asthma, or allergic rhinitis.

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